

SATURDAY GAZETTE DECEMBER 12

OUR NEW YORK CORRESPONDENCE.  
NEW YORK, Dec. 8, 1874.

THE ITALIAN OPERA SEASON.

The Italian opera season is over for the present, and the Academy of Music will be deserted until Miss Kellogg takes possession with her English Opera Company. Mr. Strakosch has not met with the encouragement that his efforts deserve, and it is not unnatural that he should feel disengaged. Last year he barely paid his expenses, and this year he has already lost \$40,000. The people go to the opera for one or two nights and then stop. That sort of patronage is not going to pay a manager. Then they want a new opera every night. Now it is three times more expensive to mount an opera than a play. At the Academy of Music, "Aida" and "Lohengrin" cost Mr. Strakosch \$20,000 each to bring out, all the scenery, costumes, and music being new, and "Lohengrin" costs \$3,500 every night it is sung. Besides the regular troupe, the orchestra and chorus are largely increased, there are four solo corsets on the stage, besides horses and other smaller things too numerous to mention. Mr. Strakosch provided Nilsson's dresses in this opera and still holds them in his possession. Mlle. Albani did not wish to wear the garments that had come originally to New York audience. Nilsson's tall and slender figure, and her agent wrote Mr. Strakosch to that effect. Mr. Strakosch replied that he thought it hardly fair that he should go to the expense of new costumes when the old had been worn but a few times, but with his usual liberality he offered to pay for the making if Mlle. Albani would buy the material. The prima donna accepted this offer and appeared in beautiful new robes. The cost of the goods alone for these two dresses was \$500. A prima donna as a rule finds her own dresses, the cost of which, judging by the above figures, must make quite a hole in her receipts.

**IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT.**  
Many people doubtless think that the practice of imprisonment for debt is a thing of the past, and that together with many other semi-barbarous customs of the early part of the present century is no longer in vogue. But they are mistaken. Although debtors may no longer be imprisoned for their debts under that name, they are readily often locked up for no cause in the world. Of course New York is not the only place in the country where such things are done, but they are probably of more frequent occurrence here elsewhere. The system, although much practiced, is none the less unjust. This is the way it is done: A man has a number of creditors. Wishing to get either money or some other sort of satisfaction from him, they tramp up pretty much any charge against him. Such as that he is about to leave the place of his property, or some other way escape the payment of his bills. A warrant is issued for the debt's arrest, and it is made to answer the charge, whether it be a felon or not. Under the circumstances, it is naturally hard to prove his innocence, and he is consequently compelled to pay a visit to the Ludlow Street Jail; an establishment for the reception of prisoners awaiting trial for almost any offense. Cases of a similar nature are far from being uncommon, and in fact the number of occupants of the Ludlow Street Jail is always large. Nearly all the persons there claim to be locked up for debt, as that is considered a much more respectable offense than forgery, or other crimes.

THE REVIVAL OF LOHENGRIN.

The most important and most interesting opera announced by Mr. Strakosch was postponed until the last week of the season, and then only sang twice. If so, to "Lohengrin." The town was on the tip top of expectation to hear Mlle. Albani in the role of Elsa, and the Academy was packed on both nights of the performance. Mlle. Albani's assumption of the role was thoroughly artistic; it is hard to find any fault with it, but it had not the inspiration of Nilsson's personation. Signor Carpi as Lohengrin, sang the music of his part with taste and some fire, but he acted very poorly, or rather he did not act at all.

It was no small matter to learn such difficult parts as Elsa and Lohengrin in the short time allotted to Mlle. Albani and Signor Carpi, and it is to their credit that they performed them as well as they did. Campanini had made a reputation in this opera before he came to this country, and therefore felt perfectly at home in his part. To Carpi it was all new and he is not to be blamed for feeling a little awkward.

PAINT, POWDER, ETC.

Since the early days of paint, powder and court plaster patches, the ladies have not disguised their natural complexions as completely as they are doing at the present time. Not long ago, one could tell a lady the moment she saw her; now it is impossible to tell a Murray Hill belle from one of the demi-monde. Your own cousin, perhaps your sister too, black her eyes and paints her face after the fashion which we used to think belonged to an entirely different class of society.

I am utterly surprised when looking around me at the theatre or opera, to see persons whom I know to be ladies, painted like ballet girls. One is utterly bewildered at the matinees. The young ladies who follow the fashions appear with their faces painted, and often encased, their eyes blacked, and sometimes with the lids painted red after a peculiar French style and their hair brought down low on the forehead, and powdered in regular scroops, an inch above their carefully corked eye brows. Then their lips are so heavily loaded with salve and preparation, that kissing becomes an impossibility, and kissing utterly out of the question. Over this conglomeration they wear a thin veil of the palest grey, sometimes dotted with black, which heightens the effect to an astonishing degree.

Under all this stuff they may have a most beautiful natural complexion, but that is not the fashion, so they cover it out of sight; but preserve it by bathing their faces in cold cream on going to bed. To say that these young ladies look downright fat, would be doing them scant justice.

And in the evening in full dress, ladies outdo themselves. I am still taking of ladies of good families, please bear in mind. The lowness of their necks and their fathers and brothers blush for them. A well known actress attended a large party in this city recently, and the next day she said to me: "I assure you that when I looked about me at that collection of the bon ton, I was the only woman in the room, dressed with any regard to decency. Yet I have no doubt that they rather scorned my virtues in their hearts." I am often reminded of a verse on a dancing girl in Gilbert's Bab Ballads:

And in sooth, it oft occurs  
That while these matrons sigh,  
Their dresses are lower than her's,  
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And their hair is hair they buy,  
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Another device of the girl of the period is an instep pad. If you happen to notice a pretty instep crossing the muddy streets, or getting into a stage, it is just as likely to be a delusion, for a bit of cotton help shoe-maker amazingly.

SAVING THE PENNIES.

An old adage says: "Save the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves," and judging from the number of savings-banks in this city and the patronage which they receive, it would seem that New York had tried the plan and found the adage a true one. The number of savings banks is over thirty, and the excess of assets over liabilities amount to about ten millions of dollars. The oldest ones are of course the most flourishing, as is seen in the case of the Bowery Savings Bank and the Bleeker Street Bank. This one on Bleeker Street is the oldest in the country, having been chartered in 1819 as the Bank for Savings in the City of New York. It was first situated on Chambers street, but was removed in 1856 to a hand some marble building on Bleeker street, which it occupies still. Out of the whole 10,187 depositors opening accounts 2,711 were married women, 2,060 single, 882 widows 241 minors, and 65 colored persons. The bank, since its organization, has opened about 366,000 accounts, and re-

ceived from depositors some \$110,000,000. The Comptroller of the bank has been connected with it for forty years. The few residents on the Bowery patronize the well known Bleeker Street Bank to a great extent. The Bowery Savings Bank, situated on Bowery near Grand street was chartered in 1834, forty years since.

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THE SUNDAY QUESTION.

Shall we observe the Sabbath according to the dictates of our conscience, or shall the laws compel us to follow a prescribed rule? The question which is now agitating the clergy and laity of both this city and Brooklyn. There have been more places of amusement open on Sunday evenings in this city this season than ever before. Theatres, operas, and concerts have been in full blast upon these evenings, and attract large and attentive audiences. Naturally, the clergymen have become indignant at what they choose to call this desecration of the Lord's day and a number have denounced it from their pulpits. Mr. Talmage not only denounces Sunday amusements, but he pitches into theatre generally, giving them no quarter at all. Many people, probably play-goers themselves, think that Mr. Talmage's attacks upon the stage are not because he honestly looks upon theatres as pest-houses, but because by abusing and preaching against them, he creates a sensation, and therefore feels perfectly at home in his part. To Carpi it was all new and he is not to be blamed for feeling a little awkward.

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Extreme suffering continues to prevail in Nebraska and other parts of the West in consequence of the ravages of the grasshoppers last summer.

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